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Land Sale Would Support West Side Art Gallery Expansion

An East Garfield Park art gallery would expand through a City-owned land sale introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

345 Art Gallery at 345 N. Kedzie Ave. would use the vacant, .14-acre City property to build a 600-square-foot addition onto its current building and create an outdoor sculpture garden. Valued at \$49,000, the land would be sold for \$1.

The \$183,000 project, which would include a new concrete foundation, fencing, and landscaping, would showcase the work of local artists and provide the community with expanded facilities for private events.

The work is in part being funded by a \$40,000 Neighborhood Opportunity Fund grant from the City, announced earlier this year.

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City Assistance Would Help Rehabilitate 122-Unit Kenwood Housing Complex

Greenwood Park Apartments in Kenwood would be rehabilitated and preserved for low-income tenants through a low-interest, \$2.5 million multi-family loan introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The \$24 million project by Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) would create 122 renovated apartments in 15 two- and three-story walk-up buildings along 47th Street between Greenwood and Ellis Avenues. Interior improvements would include kitchen and bathroom upgrades and new flooring. Exterior improvements would include new roofs, boilers, windows, sidewalks, and a resurfaced parking lot.

Ninety of the units would be leased to tenants earning up to 50 percent of area median income (AMI), and 32 units would be affordable for incomes up to 80 percent of AMI. HUD would provide rental assistance for 50 of the units.

Additional funding sources would include \$4.4 million Citi loan, \$1.8 million grant from Citi Community Capital, \$2.8 million from POAH, and \$1.7 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits from the Illinois Housing Development Authority that would generate \$11.7 million in tax credit equity for the project.

The Greenwood Park Apartments complex was built in 1974.

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TIF Funds Proposed for Gately Park Track & Field Complex, Other Park Improvement Projects

A \$57 million indoor track and field complex under construction in Pullman's Gately Park is among five park improvement projects proposed for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance by Mayor Rahm Emanuel today.

The 139,000-square-foot project at 744 E. 103th St. is planned to include a 200-meter track; eight-lane sprint track; space for long jump, pole vault, and high jump events; and seating and concessions for 3,500 spectators. The work, which started in August, would be financed in part by \$10 million in TIF.

Additional Funding would include \$18 million from After School Matters, a \$14.5 million State of Illinois grant, \$2 million from Chicago Public Schools, \$6.1 million from the Chicago Park District, and \$6 million from Exelon Corp.

The other park projects include:

Revere Park, 2508 W. Irving Park Road

TIF assistance in the amount of \$6 million would support improvements to the field house at Revere Park in North Center. Upgrades would include ADA-access upgrades, a new roof, windows, doors, and gymnasium floor. The park's Boys and Girls Club would also be updated with new windows, doors and HVAC system. The work would be entirely funded by TIF.

Chase Park, 4701 N. Ashland Ave.

TIF assistance in the amount of \$6 million would improve the field house and athletic field at Chase Park in Uptown. Enhancements would include a new roof, soffits, gutters, artificial turf surfaces, fencing landscaping and lighting. The work would be entirely funded by TIF.

McKinley Park, 2210 W. Pershing Road

A new dog park in the McKinley Park community's namesake park would be financed through \$400,000 in TIF assistance. The 0.28-acre space at the southwest corner of the park would include fencing, benches, artificial turf and gravel surfaces, areas for large and small dogs, a water fountain, benches, and landscaping. The work would be entirely funded by TIF.

Sumac Park, 4201 S. Champlain Ave.

Sumac Park in Grand Boulevard would receive \$350,000 in TIF to support the addition of a walking path, landscaping, drinking fountain, workout stations and benches. The work would be entirely funded by TIF.

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\$3.9 Million Proposed to Support Retail Thrive Zone Businesses

Mayor Emanuel's Retail Thrive Zone initiative would be allocated an additional \$3.9 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance to support targeted West and South side retail corridors under a proposal submitted to City Council today.

Provided as small business grants up to \$250,000, the funding would be used to cover up to 75 percent of a project's development costs. The eight targeted retail corridors are located in Austin, Back of Yards, Bronzeville, Chatham, Englewood, South Shore, West Humboldt Park and West Pullman.

The proposal would allocate \$1.5 million for the Englewood Neighborhood TIF district; \$750,000 for the 87th/Cottage Grove TIF district; \$500,000 each for the Austin Commercial and 67th/Wentworth TIF districts; \$400,000 for the Avalon Park/South Shore TIF district; and \$250,000 for the 43rd/Cottage Grove TIF district.

Eligible expenses include structural repairs and improvements to roofs, facades, plumbing, electrical or HVAC systems.

Fifty-one businesses have been awarded grants to date. More information about the initiative is available at www.thrivezones.com.

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\$5.25 Million in Funding Proposed to Support Small Businesses in Nine TIF Districts

The City's Small Business Improvement Fund (SBIF) would be renewed in nine Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts under a proposal introduced today to City Council by Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

The SBIF program provides matching grants of up to \$150,000 for the repair and remodeling of commercial and industrial properties in eligible TIF districts.

The proposal would reallocate \$1 million for existing SBIF programs in the Fullerton/Milwaukee TIF district; \$750,000 in the Lawrence/Kedzie TIF district; \$500,000 each in the 47th/King Drive, Addison South, Archer/Central, Avondale, Portage Park, South Chicago, and Western/Ogden TIF districts.

SBIF grants cover a range of building improvements including HVAC systems, repair and replacement of facades, roofs, accessibility compliance, interior remodeling, and other upgrades. The assistance is provided upon project completion and does not have to be repaid.

The SBIF program operates in 94 of the City's 145 TIF districts, which are designated areas that allocate local property tax growth for improvement projects within their borders. For district maps and related information, visit cityofchicago.org/TIF.

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Former Regional Headquarters for YMCA/YWCA Proposed for Landmark Status

The former Near West Side regional headquarters of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) would be designated as an official landmark under a recommendation submitted to City Council today by the Commission of Chicago Landmarks.

Located at the southeast corner of West Monroe Street and South Ashland Avenue, the complex consists of five Classical and Georgian Revival buildings constructed between 1907 and 1931. Characterized by red masonry exteriors with limestone details, the buildings played an important role in the social and cultural history of Chicago by providing lodging and an array of recreational and educational activities for thousands of young men and women, including veterans and immigrants, according to the Landmarks Commission. Different phases were designed by the noted architecture firms of Robert Berlin; Perkins, Chatten & Hammond; Shattuck & Hussey; and Robert DeGolyer. More recently, the complex served as the Salvation Army's Harbor Light Center.

The designation, which was recommended by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in September, would protect all exterior elevations and rooflines from significant alteration.

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